

NEWS RELEASE

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KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS ANNOUNCES PLAN TO ACCELERATE THE SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS AT OSAWATOMIE AND TORONTO UNITS

Kansas Secretary of Corrections Roger Werholtz today announced that the Department is taking steps to suspend operations at the Lansing Correctional Facility (LCF) – South Unit at Osawatomie on February 6, 2009 and the El Dorado Correctional Facility (EDCF) – East Unit at Toronto on February 27, 2009.

“At the beginning of the Legislative Session we announced our intent to suspend operations of these two units effective April 1,” Secretary Werholtz said. “As a result of available minimum security inmate capacity and open staff positions, we have determined that we can advance those dates and further reduce our Fiscal Year 2009 operating budget.”

At the present time, 74 inmates are housed at the Osawatomie Unit, which has an operating capacity for 80 minimum security men. Most of those inmates are participating in the Therapeutic Community (TC) substance abuse program which operates at the unit. The TC will be temporarily relocated to the Lansing Correctional Facility (LCF) – East Unit, and the inmates participating in the program will be transferred to continue participation in the program. At this time, all 17 staff members at Osawatomie have been offered transfer to open positions at LCF. Ten of the 17 staff have indicated that they will accept those offers for transfer.

The Toronto Unit has a capacity for 70 minimum custody inmates and a current population of 62. Those inmates will be transferred to available minimum security placements throughout the correctional system. At the present time, the Department has a capacity for 8,402 male inmates, and a male inmate population of 7,864. All 17 staff members at Toronto have been offered transfer to open positions at EDCF – Central or North Unit. Fifteen of the 17 employees have indicated that they will accept those offers to transfer.

(more)

“We recognize that suspending operations at Osawatomie and Toronto will have an impact on those communities,” Secretary Werholtz said. “However, these actions will assist us in further reducing our budget for this year and subsequent years with the least adverse impact on public safety.”

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